

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A plastic surface printing method for printing a plastic surface (18) by means of hot stamping with a metallic hot stamping tool (3) that can be heated and is coated with plastic, wherein comprising:
providing a metallic hot-stamping tool with a the plastic-coated outer stamping surface of the hot stamping tool forms the stamping surface (7)
using a heating device, preheating a work piece surface to be printed; and
using the stamping surface to press a carrier foil against a surface of the work piece such that transfers thea pigment layer (9) applied ontois transferred from the carrier foil (10) onto the work piece (16) when the carrier foil (10) is pressed against the surface (18) of a work piece (16) to be printed, characterized in that wherein the work piece surface (18) to be printed is preheated before the printing process with the aid of a heating device (22), and in that the to a temperature of the stamping surface (7) of the hot stamping tool lies between 140 °C and 240 °C, preferably between 200 °C and 220 °C.

2. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in thatwherein preheating the work piece surface comprises adapting a the heating power of the heating device (22) is adapted in response to the a texture of the surface to be printed, e.g., the color, the roughness, the material, etc. (18).

3. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 2, characterized in thatwherein adapting the heating power comprises:

sensing the texture of the surface (18) of the work piece (16) to be printed ~~is determined~~ by means of a sensor; (24) and

forwarding that forwards the thusly determined data indicative of the sensed texture to an evaluation device that (26), wherein said evaluation device subsequently adjusts the heating power of the heating device (22) accordingly.

4. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, wherein preheating the work piece surface comprises characterized in that the heating device (22) locally heats heating the work piece surface to be printed, by means of an infrared lamp or a fan heater.

5. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in thatwherein the work piece surface (18) is heated to a temperature between 30-°C and 250-°C .

6. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in thatwherein the work piece surface (18) is heated to a temperature between 80-°C and 120-°C.

7. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in thatwherein the preheated work piece surface comprises a surface ~~the plastic surface (18)~~ forms part of a plastic toothbrush.

8. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in thatwherein the toothbrush surface consists of a thermoplastic plastic, preferably of polypropylene.

9. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 3, characterized in thatwherein the texture is sensed by sensor (24) consists of a pyrometer.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in thatwherein the hot-stamping tool is coated with a silicon layer.

11. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 10, characterized in thatwherein the silicone layer has a thickness between 1 and 4 mm, ~~preferably between 2 and 3 mm.~~

12. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the silicone layer has a thickness between 2 and 3 mm.

13. (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the stamping surface is preheated to a temperature between 200°C and 220°C.

14. (New) A plastic surface printing method, the method comprising:
providing a metallic hot-stamping tool with a plastic-coated outer surface that forms a stamping surface;
preheating a work piece surface to be printed;
heating the stamping surface to a temperature between 140°C and 240°C; and
using the heated stamping surface to press a carrier foil against a surface of the preheated work piece such that a pigment layer is transferred from the carrier foil onto the work piece.

15. (New) The method according to Claim 14, wherein preheating the work piece surface comprises adapting a heating power of a work piece surface heater in response to a sensed texture of the work piece surface.

16. (New) The method according to Claim 15, wherein adapting the heating power comprises:

sensing the texture of the surface by means of a pyrometer;

forwarding sensor data from the pyrometer to an evaluation device; and
by the evaluation device, subsequently adjusting the heating power of the heater.

17. (New) The method according to Claim 14, wherein preheating the work piece surface comprises locally heating the work piece surface using an infrared lamp.

18. (New) The method according to Claim 14, wherein the work piece surface is preheated to a temperature between 80°C and 120°C.

19. (New) The method according to Claim 14, wherein the hot-stamping tool is coated with a silicon layer that has a thickness between 2 and 3 mm.

20. (New) The method according to Claim 14, comprising heating the stamping surface to a temperature between 200°C and 220°C.